

Application No. 10/072,190
Filed: February 7, 2002
Group Art Unit: 3673

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 5, 12 and 16, without prejudice.

Please amend claims 1-4, 6-11, 13-15 and 17-20 so that the claims in the application read as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for the mechanical decontamination of ~~preferably~~ radioactively contaminated surfaces of mineral materials, wherein said surface is concrete or masonry, said method comprising the steps of:

~~in particular concrete surfaces and masonry, wherein the surface to be cleaned is hammered~~ hammering said surface by way of an apparatus with several pneumatically actuated striking tools arranged in a housing, wherein ~~the~~an actuation air is generated in the space in said housing, wherein said space in said housing is sealed from the surroundings in an air-permeable manner; ~~is exited to the surroundings and the space in which the striking tools operate is sealed from the surroundings in an air permeable manner~~ and

removing particles from this said space by suction ~~removed particles are suctioned off, wherein the a volume of the air which that is suctioned off is larger than the a volume of the air which that is used for actuation.~~

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method according to claim 1, wherein the actuation air before exiting to the surroundings is led into an expansion space.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~A~~ method according to claim 1, wherein ~~the said~~ striking tools are equipped with chisel-like hammer bolts, ~~and are operated such that the majority of~~

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~~particles are struck off with the size order~~ wherein said striking tools, when in operation, strike off particles having a size in the range of 0.2 mm to 2.0 mm.

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4. (Currently Amended) A device for the mechanical decontamination of contaminated ~~surfaces~~ surface of mineral materials, wherein said surface is ~~in particular of~~ radioactively contaminated concrete ~~surfaces and/or~~ radioactively contaminated masonry, wherein the device comprises several pneumatically actuated striking tools, wherein said striking tools are ~~which are~~ arranged in a housing with several chambers arranged over one another such that each of said striking tool is in active connection with each chamber, wherein said several chambers comprise any one of a pressurized air feed chamber, a pressurized air expansion chamber, a suction chamber, a collecting chamber or any combination thereof, and wherein said striking tools are releasably connected to the pressurized air chamber and sealingly pass through arranged chambers, wherein said collecting chamber is sealed with respect to the surroundings in an air-permeable manner.

5. (Cancelled)

6. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 54, wherein the suction chamber and the collecting chamber form a common chamber.

7. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 4, wherein the pressurized air feed chamber in the device is arranged at the top and the collecting chamber is arranged at the bottom.

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8. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 4, wherein the pressurized air expansion chamber is arranged between the suction chamber lying directly thereabove and the collecting chamber lying directly therebelow.

9. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 64, wherein the pressurized air expansion chamber lies between the pressurized air feed chamber lying directly thereabove and the common collecting and suction chamber lying directly therebelow.

B 10. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 8, wherein the expansion chamber is passed through by several lead-throughs which form communicating connections between the collecting chamber and the suction chamber.

11. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 10, wherein the lead-throughs peripherally pass through the expansion chamber.

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 124, wherein the air-permeable sealing is effected by way of a circumferential skirt.

14. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 124, wherein the air-permeable sealing is effected by way of a circumferential brush seal.

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15. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 7, wherein the pressurized air feed chamber projects beyond the chamber located therebelow and is held by an overlapping clip which serves as a mounting for a robot arm or handling apparatus connectable thereto.

16. (Cancelled)

B 17. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim ~~164~~, wherein the releasable striking tools are held by way of screw connections passing through the housing on the outside.

18. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 4, wherein the striking tools are equipped with exchangeable, chisel-like hammer bolts.

19. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim ~~54~~, wherein the pressurized air feed chamber in the device is arranged at the top and the collecting chamber at the bottom.

20. (Currently Amended) The A-device according to claim 8, wherein the collecting chamber is sealed with respect to the surroundings in an air-permeable manner.